DRAFT 2018 Policy Platform

The 2018 Policy Platform identifies federal and local/state policies and advocacy priorities affecting the South Asian American community. The platform highlights negative and model policies on issue areas ranging from immigration, hate crimes, civil rights and liberties to protecting the rights of LGBTIQ South Asian Americans, achieving gender equity, accessing healthcare, mental health services, and achieving economic justice.

South Asian Americans navigate the intersections of gender, race, national origin, religious affiliation, class, immigration status, and sexual orientation, often on a daily basis. This platform should serve a guide to inform allies and grassroots South Asian organizations so that they are able to advocate for just and equitable public policies at the national and local levels.

Immigration

With over 5 million South Asians in the United States, immigrant justice is a top priority for the community. South Asian Americans possess a range of immigration statuses. The South Asian American community includes undocumented immigrants, dependents and temporary workers on various visas, refugees and asylum-seekers, lawful permanent residents, and United States citizens. There are over 450,000 undocumented Indian-Americans alone and over 40% of them are eligible for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and the Obama-era Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (DAPA) programs to allow them to remain in the country.

Along with the National Coalition of South Asian Organizations (NCSO), SAALT advocates for broad immigrant justice principles that address the needs of all South Asian Americans.

We support legislation that:

- Creates a path to permanent residency or citizenship for all undocumented immigrants
- Provides reasonable processing periods and affordable fees for all visa statuses
- Grants work authorization regardless of status
- Eliminates visa backlog
- Implements strong worker protections and paths to residency for temporary skilled and unskilled workers

NEGATIVE POLICIES

H.R. 4760 Securing America's Future Act[1]
Sponsored by Rep. Goodlatte [R-VA-6]
Status: House - Referred to the Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security 1/24/18

[1] https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/4760

- Eliminates Diversity Visa Programs
- Annual Immigration Levels Revised
- Implements DNA testing to establish family relationships
- H-2C visa temporary agricultural worker program is revised
- No federal, state, or local government entity or individual may prohibit or restrict a federal, state, or local government entity or official from complying with the immigration laws or assisting related federal law enforcement activities.
- DHS is given authority to review social media activities of visa applicants and establish a biometric exit data system

Texas S.B. 4
Primary sponsor Senator Charles Perry [R-TX-28]
Status: Passed May 7, 2017

In 2017, the Texas state legislature passed an anti-sanctuary bill, which requires police chiefs and sheriffs to cooperate with federal immigration officials. It also permits police to question the immigration status of anyone they arrest.[2]

Iowa S.F. 481[3]
Sponsored by Committee on Local Government
Status: Signed by Governor April 10, 2018

In 2018, the Iowa state legislature passed a law which pressures local law enforcement to serve as immigration officers and requires county sheriff's to comply with "detainer request" issued by ICE to hold a person suspected of being undocumented for an additional 48 hours after scheduled release for further investigation by the Federal government.

Georgia S.B. 452[4]
Primary sponsor Sen. Jesse Stone [R-GA-23]
Status: House - Postponed March 27, 2018

"Deportation Pipeline Bill" mandates collusion between courthouses and immigration enforcement agents and allows police to unconstitutionally detain individuals and provisions that benefit bail and bond companies.[5]

MODEL POLICIES

H.R. 4944 Reuniting Families Act
Sponsored by Rep. Judy Chu [D-CA-27]
Status: House - Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary February 6, 2018

[2] https://legiscan.com/TX/bill/SB4/2017
[3] https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf481
[4] http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/display/20172018/SB/452
[5] https://projectsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Bill-452-Fact-Sheet.pdf

The Reuniting Families Act would reduce family immigration visa backlogs and promote humane and timely reunification of immigrant families:[6]

- Recaptures Immigrant Visas Lost to Bureaucratic Delay
- Reclassifies Spouses & Minor Children of Green Card Holders as "Immediate Relatives"
- Eliminates Per-Country Limits
- Provides Greater Enforcement Relief for Families
- Provides Relief for Orphans and Widows

H.R. 4253 American Promise Act (2017)
Sponsored by Rep. Nydia M. Velazquez [D-NY-7]
Status: House - Referred to Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security Nov 21, 2017

The American Promise Act adjusts the status of eligible persons receiving Temporary Protected Status (TPS) or Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) to permanent residence:

- Applicant must have receipt of TPS, eligible for TPS, or in receipt of DED on or before October 1, 2017. Adjustment is provided to spouses, parents or unmarried sons or daughters of an applicant receiving adjustment
- A person receiving status adjustment is allowed to work
- Applicants from countries designated under TPS or granted DED whose valid TPS or DED expires on or after January 1, 2017 are considered eligible for status adjustment
- A person would be able to apply for naturalization after 5 years of receiving status adjustment. Eligible applicants would not be subject to English language requirements.

NCSO LED POLICY

Since 2015, **Adhikaar**, a member of the National Coalition of South Asian Organizations (NCSO), has led the struggle in campaigning for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) renewal for Nepal. In April 2018, Adhikaar successfully hosted a Congressional Briefing, calling on Members of Congress to support renewal of TPS for Nepal. Although the Trump administration terminated the TPS program or Nepal, Adhikaar continues to advocate, organize, and fight for a permanent solution.

S.1615 Dream Act of 2017[7]
Sponsored by Sen. Graham [R-SC] **Co-sponsored by** Sen. Durbin [D-IL], Sen. Flake [R-AZ], Sen. Schumer [D-NY], Sen. Murkowski [R-AK], Sen. Cortez [D-NV], Sen. Feinstein [D-CA], Sen. Harris [D-CA], Sen. Gardner [R-CO], Sen. Bennet [D-CO], Sen. Nelson [D-FL]
Status: Senate - Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary July 20, 2017

[6] http://www.aila.org/infonet/aaajc-provides-a-summary-of-the-reuniting-families
[7] https://www.nilc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Clean-Dream-Act-1pg-2017.pdf

A clean Dream Act would create a pathway to U.S. citizenship without using young immigrants as bargaining chips to harm immigrant communities. A clean Dream Act means:

- No funding for a border wall and increased border security
- No funding for interior enforcement
- No funding for more detention centers
- No mandatory E-Verify, the federal government's web-based employment eligibility verification program.

H-4 Visa Work Authorization

We find the Trump Administration's intent to revoke the hard fought Employment Authorization rule for H-4 visa holders very disturbing. In FY 2017, nearly 86% of individuals who received H-4 visas were from South Asian countries and over 90% of the H-4 visa holders have been granted employment authorization after the 2015 rule were from South Asian countries. We know that H-1B workers and their families are most successful when H-4 visa holders have the ability to contribute to their household income and our economy and pursue their goals.

Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-WA-7) and Rep. Mia Love's (R-UT-4) bi-partisan Dear Colleague letter asks Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to maintain the rule granting work authorization to certain H-4 visa holders, following this Administration's December 2017 announcement on its intent to rescind the rule.

NCSO LED POLICY

Raksha, a member of the NCSO, was one of the driving forces in mobilizing the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to implement the work authorization policy for the welfare of abused H-4 visa holders. Raksha currently advocates for 400 abused H-4 visa holders and remains committed to the continuation of work authorization for the abused spouses of H-1B visa holders under this administration.

A.B. 4 California Trust Act 2013[8]

Authored by Assemblymembers Ammiano, Alejo, De Leon, Manuel Perez, and Skinner

Status: Approved by Governor October 5, 2013

The TRUST Act prohibits law enforcement officials from detaining an individual on the basis of a an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) hold after that individual becomes eligible for release from custody, unless, among other things, the individual has been convicted of specified crimes.

A.B. 2792 Transparent Review of Unjust Transfers and Holds (TRUTH) Act 2016[9]

[8] http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/13-14/bill/asm/ab_0001-0050/ab_4_bill_20131005_chaptered.pdf

[9] https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB2792

Authored by Assemblymembers Bonta, Alejo, Leno, and Lopez
Status Approved by Governor September 28, 2016

The TRUTH Act brings transparency to local jail entanglement with immigration enforcement:

- Provides "Know Your Rights" to every individual.
- Requires local law enforcement agency, prior to an interview between ICE and an individual in custody, to provide a written consent form explaining purpose of the interview and that the individual may decline the interview. The bill requires the form to be translated in multiple languages.
- Requires that if a local law enforcement agency provides ICE with notification of an individual's release date and time, then the local law enforcement agency must also provide the same notification to the individual and their attorney or permitted designee.
- Requires a local legislative body to hold a community forum annually if local law enforcement allows ICE access to any individual.

A.B. 450 California Immigrant Worker Protection Act 2018[10]
Authored by Assemblymember David Chiu (San Francisco)
Status: Approved by Governor October 5, 2017

- Prohibits employers from allowing federal immigration agents on private business property without a judicial warrant.
- Requires business owners to give their employees public notice — within 72 hours — of federal immigration inspections of employee records. Businesses that fail to provide notice to employees face penalties of $2,000 to $10,000 for violations

S.B. 54 California Values Act 2018[11]
Authored by Assemblymembers De Leon, Atkins, Beall, Bonta, Chiu, Cooper, Gomez, Levine, Pan, Reyes, Santiago, Skinner and Wiener
Status: Approved by Governor October 5, 2017

- Limits local law enforcement agencies and others, such as school police and security departments, from using money or personnel "to investigate, interrogate, detain, detect or arrest individuals" for immigration enforcement
- Amends TRUST Act to entirely bar state and local law enforcement's cooperation with immigration holds, and to restrict their responses to immigration notification and transfer requests

Hate Crimes

[10] https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB450
[11] https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB54

Since the election of President Trump, SAALT has documented a precipitous rise in hate violence across our communities. SAALT documented 213 incidents of hate violence aimed at South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab American communities in the year following the 2016 presidential election. This is a 45% increase in hate crimes from the 2015-2016 pre-election period.

VALUES:

- Expand and enforce strong anti-bias and hate crimes legislation.
- Extend hate crime protections to more people based on sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, and immigration status.
- **Adopt restorative Justice approaches where possible to reduce over-reliance on the criminal justice system** - promote healing of victims of hate crimes and require individuals convicted of hate crimes (young people and people of color) to undergo educational programming centered around the community targeted by the hate crime.
- Institute anti-racism trainings for law enforcement at all levels.
- Improve and mandate data collection of hate crimes at all levels of government.

NEGATIVE POLICIES

S.994 - Protecting Religiously-Affiliated Institutions Act

- Sponsored by Senator Hatch [R-UT], the bill increases police presence within and surrounding religious institutions.[12]
- **Status:** Senate - Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar April 26, 2018

Protect and Serve Act - no bill number yet

- Sponsored by Senator Hatch [R-UT] and Representative Rutherford [R-FL-4], the bill uses the federal hate crimes framework to punish criminal offenses targeting law enforcement or those perceived to be law enforcement
- **Status**: To be introduced in early May, 2018

MODEL POLICIES

H.R. 1566 NO HATE Act
Sponsored By: Rep. Beyer [D-VA-8]
Status: House Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations March 31, 2017

The NO HATE Act is the only comprehensive legislation proposed to establish incentives for state and local law enforcement to submit credible and complete hate

[12] https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/994

crime reports, create grants for state-run hate crime hotlines, create a federal private right of action for victims of hate crimes, even those who live in states without hate crimes laws, and allow for judges to require community service or educational programming for individuals convicted under the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

Increasing Law Enforcement Awareness of and Enhancing the Response to Hate Crimes and Crimes Motivated by Bias is a 2017 resolution passed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) which encourages law enforcement to take reports of hate crimes and bias incidents seriously, forge meaningful partnerships with communities, and proactively address hate crimes and bias incidents.

City of Boston Anti-Islamophobia Campaign, the city installed posters on public transportation that demonstrate step by step how a bystander can help a person being harassed and help de-escalate harassment.

NCSO LED POLICY

Hate Crimes Prevention Act - In 2018 **Kiran, Inc. and North Carolina Asian Americans Together (NCAAT)**, members of the NCSO, continue to support efforts on this North Carolina legislation to expand the scope of the definition of a hate crime, allow for civil action for victims, establish a hate crime repository, require reporting, and provide for law enforcement training.

Civil Rights and Liberties

The significant increase in racial and religious profiling, surveillance, and hate violence aimed at South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Arab, and Middle Eastern American communities during the 2016 election cycle rival the backlash in the year after 9/11. Issues of mistrust and lack of accountability from law enforcement have plagued communities of color for decades, and particularly since 2001, when Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities have been unjustly targeted by government policies of racial and religious profiling. SAALT supports legislation that would:

VALUES:

- Reject enforcement only approaches and eliminate profiling based on national origin, religion, ethnicity, and perceived immigration status.
- Eliminate profiling by law enforcement based on race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, or perceived immigration status.
- Eliminate the role of local and state law enforcement in immigration enforcement
- Restore due process and human rights standards, such as meaningful waivers from deportation, access to counsel, and judicial review.

- End the mass surveillance of communities and technologies used to criminalize South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Arab, and Middle Eastern individuals and communities.

NEGATIVE POLICIES

Operation Janus - Department of Homeland Security (DHS), identified about 315,000 cases of "missing" fingerprint data from the centralized digital fingerprint repository. According to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) failure to comply with any eligibility requirement for naturalization is subject to revocation of naturalization. The Department of Justice (DOJ) filed civil denaturalization complaints against Baljinder Singh of New Jersey, Parvez Manzoor Khan of Florida, and Rashid Mahmood of Connecticut under Operation Janus. In January 2018, Baljinder Singh of New Jersey, whose fingerprints were missing from the centralized digital fingerprint repository, was denaturalized by the USCIS.

Countering Violent Extremism Program (CVE) - a federal interagency program that cultivates faith leaders, teachers, and health providers to serve as informants to law enforcement from a flawed framework of addressing "violent extremism" with a disproportionate focus on American Muslims. The program provides grants to organizations who complete an application process.

MODEL POLICIES

S.411 End Racial and Religious Profiling Act (ERRPA)
Sponsored by Sen. Cardin [D-MD]
Status: Senate - Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary February 16, 2017

ERRPA creates a uniform definition of racial profiling, including discriminatory profiling based on religion, ethnicity, or other protected categories, prohibited at all levels. ERRPA mandates training on racial profiling issues, authorizes grants to law enforcement agencies to implement best practices discouraging discriminatory profiling, and requires data collection by these agencies.

NCSO LED POLICY

Community Safety Act[13] - In 2013 **Desis Rising Up & Moving (DRUM)**, a member of the NCSO, helped pass the Community Safety Act in New York City, which curbs discriminatory policing practices and establishes accountability mechanisms for the New York City Police Department (NYPD)

[13] http://www.drumnyc.org/racial-immigrant-justice-program/

Protecting the Census 2020 and Beyond
Our constitution requires a counting of all persons in the U.S. every ten years. That count is of all people, and not just citizens. Anything that threatens an accurate count should be avoided.

A fair and accurate census, and the collection of useful, objective data about our nation's people, housing, economy, and communities, are among the most significant civil rights issues facing the country today. Adding a new question on citizenship to the 2020 Census will disrupt preparations at a pivotal point in the decade, undermining years of research and testing. Asking every household and every person in the country about their citizenship status in the current political environment – when there is no need to do so – will cause fear and may cause hundreds of thousands of people in our communities to avoid the census for fear of being targeted by the current administration. This in turn will significantly increase costs to taxpayers. According to the Census Bureau, every one percent decrease in the self-response rate will increase the cost of the count by $55 million.

H.R. 5359 - 2020 Census Improving Data and Enhanced Accuracy (IDEA) Act[14]
Sponsored by Rep. Maloney [D-NY-12]
Status: House - Referred to House Committee on Oversight and Gov Reform March 21, 2018

- Prohibits last minute changes or additions to the census without proper research, studying, and testing
- Require biannual reports on the U.S. Census Bureau's operation plan
- Apply the provisions of this bill to only the decennial census

S. 2580 Every Person Counts Act of 2018[15]
Sponsored by Bob Menendez [D-NJ]
Status: Senate - Read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs March 20, 2018

- Amends title 13, United States Code, to make clear that each decennial census shall tabulate the total number of persons in each State.
- Prohibits the Secretary of Commerce from including any census question regarding United States citizenship or immigration status.
- Forbids exclusion of populations based on age, personnel in the Armed Forces serving abroad, federal employees and their dependents stationed abroad or other persons outside the United States.

Economic Justice and Affordable Housing

Employed in a variety of occupations in the United States — from engineers, doctors, and lawyers to convenience store clerks, assembly-line workers, restaurant workers, taxi workers, and domestic workers — South Asian Americans face challenges in the workplace that cut across class, religious, and national origin lines.

[14] https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/5359/text
[15] https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/s2580/summary

Over 200,000 South Asians currently work in the United States on temporary visas and many others work without authorization. Working-class South Asian Americans and temporary workers encounter unique types of harassment and exploitation, often compounded by limited language skills, immigration status, lack of information about rights and resources, and labor law restrictions.

We support legislation and programs that:

- Ensures access to affordable housing for immigrants
- Supports the right to collect a decent living wage with benefits**.**
- Ceases immigration enforcement at the workplace.
- Ensures work environments are free from exploitation and provide protections for labor trafficking survivors.
- Supports the rights of workers who seek to organize regardless of occupation or immigration status.

MODEL POLICIES

S.B. S2311E New York State Domestic Workers Bill of Rights (2010)[16]
Sponsored by: Sen. Diane Savino [D-NY-23]
Status: Signed by Governor

- Guarantees privately employed nannies, housekeepers, elder caregivers, and all other domestic workers with employment benefits such as unemployment insurance, workers compensation, minimum and overtime wages, and mandatory day of rest.[17]

NCSO LED POLICY

Adhikaar co-founded and currently leads the New York Health Nail Salons Coalition and created a **"Nail Salon Workers' Bill of Rights"** poster that New State York State has mandated to be posted in all salons. Adhikaar was also instrumental in advocating for New York's Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, which passed in 2010 as the first legislation in the country to recognize the rights and dignity of domestic workers.

Chhaya CDC, a member of the NCSO, works with New Yorkers of South Asian origin to advocate for and build economically stable, sustainable, and thriving communities. Chhaya CDC has created several campaigns to engage the community and local representatives, including:

[16] https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2009/s2311/amendment/original
[17] https://labor.ny.gov/legal/laws/pdf/domestic-workers/facts-for-domestic-workers.pdf

- Basement Apartments Safe for Everyone (BASE) Campaign creates a path for homeowners to convert basement dwelling units into legal rental units by adding a new Accessory Dwelling Unit" category to NYC's building codes. The campaign has been endorsed by eight city council members and thirty local organizations.

Protecting the Rights of LGBTIQ and Gender Non-Conforming South Asians

South Asians in the United States who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, questioning, or gender non-conforming (LGBTIQ) often face multiple levels of discrimination and unfair treatment in various contexts.

Immigration-related policies that have a disparate impact on South Asian LGBTIQ individuals - including the denial of immigration benefits to same-sex partners; abuse and harassment based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression in immigration detention centers; and restrictions on HIV-positive individuals from entering the country must be changed.

We support legislation that:

- Provides the same immigration benefits to LGBTIQ individuals as to other immigrants
- Ensures that LGBTIQ South Asians persecuted to their sexual orientation are able to obtain asylum relief
- Eliminates immigration restrictions against HIV positive immigrants
- Expands anti-discrimination and hate crimes policies to cover LGBTIQ individuals
- Promotes awareness and services related to LGBTIQ health issues

NCSO LED POLICY

KhushDC, a member of the NCSO, is a social, support and political group that provides a safe and supportive environment, promotes awareness and acceptance, and fosters positive cultural and sexual identity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning (LGBTQ) and additional gender or sexual minority South Asians in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

Following the Pulse Orlando shooting in 2016, KhushDC mobilized to host a LGBTQ centered dialogue to uplift Latinx and Muslim LGBTQ voices. Their intersectional approach disrupted divisive mainstream media and political narratives that narrowed the issue to gun control or even worse, exploited the opportunity to increase surveillance and profiling policies aimed at American Muslims.

> "The ramifications of this violent tragedy are being felt throughout the LGBTQIA+ community. Given that the majority of victims were Latinxs, the Trans* and queer Latinx family is especially in need of healing. We also want to recognize and hold close our Muslim LGBTQIA+ family who, because of this tragedy, will face increased Islamophobia, transphobia and homophobia. We also recognize that Latinx identities are multi-dimensional and includes people of the Muslim faith, Black folx, Indigenous people, Asian communities and so much more. Our intersections highlight the need for collective liberation ~ the need to listen to each other, to support ourselves and one another as we heal and strengthen our community bonds."

Gender Equity

Gender equity is a critical goal within all communities. Issues surrounding women's rights are of a particular concern to the South Asian American community, given that women comprise nearly half of the total South Asian American population. Among the most important issues facing South Asian American women are domestic violence, trafficking, limited access to reproductive and mental health services, and economic disempowerment. Moreover, many South Asian American women experiencing these issues encounter even greater challenges due to their dependent immigrant or undocumented status. Policies and programs must be implemented to address these systemic inequalities and provide pathways to attain true gender equity.

We support programs and policies that:

- Address and prevent gender-based violence within the South Asian American community
- Provide linguistically accessible and culturally appropriate services for South Asian American domestic violence survivors
- Protect and empower immigrant domestic violence survivors
- Support immigration policies that protect and empower dependent visa holders
- Strengthen policies aimed to prevent all forms of trafficking and provide meaningful resources to survivors
- Develop policies aimed at curbing transnational abandonment of spouses
- Increase culturally and linguistically appropriate health services for South Asian American women

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) is federal legislation that creates and supports comprehensive, cost-effective responses to the pervasive nd insidious crimes of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking. VAWA was first passed by Congress in 1994, and was reauthorized in 2000, 2005, and 2013. VAWA 2013 reauthorized critical grant programs established by the original law, and creates innovative new programs. The reauthorization strengthens federal laws by closing a jurisdictional gap that left many Native women without adequate protections and by banning discrimination against domestic violence survivors in public housing. Additionally the law increases protections for immigrant women and ensures that LGBT Americans have equal access to the services many funded by VAWA."[18]

NCSO LED POLICY

[18] https://www.justice.gov/file/29836/download

In June 2011, **Sakhi for South Asian Women**, a member of the NCSO, supported the formation of "Anti-Violence Advocates Against Deportation". The coalition speaks out against the violence communities experience from the police, the criminal "justice" system, deportation policies, and many state-sanctioned laws and policies, with a particular focus on ending deportation and the collaboration between police and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) through the Secure Communities Program.[19]

Manavi, a member of the NCSO, addresses both the immediate needs of women facing abuse and the long-term vision of establishing peaceful communities free from gender-based violence. Manavi advocates for just and equitable gender equitable policies at the Assembly Judiciary Committee in New Jersey.

New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence – Strengthens training requirements for judges. Manavi recommended that the bill be amended to include a certain number of hours for the annual training (4 hours) to be consistent with other mandated training requirements, as well as that the training should be developed in collaboration with NJCEDV.

Access to Health Care and Mental Health Resources

Health needs that affect South Asian Americans must be addressed with cultural and linguistic competency by healthcare providers and community members alike. South Asian Americans confront a range of health issues including cardiovascular disease; diabetes; various forms of cancer, mental, reproductive, and sexual health challenges; and HIV/AIDS.

Immigrant eligibility restrictions often prevent South Asian Americans from receiving vital benefits, including state-sponsored medical coverage. In addition, many South Asian Americans also face obstacles when accessing health care due to linguistic and cultural barriers, immigration status, and economic status. As a result, many South Asian Americans, including recent immigrants, the poor, the elderly, women, and children lack the ability to access linguistically and culturally appropriate health care.[20]

We support legislation that:

- Ensures the right to affordable health care for all
- Develops culturally relevant treatment strategies and research to understand diseases affecting South Asians
- Ensures availability of linguistically accessible and culturally competent medical services
- Increases research and culturally appropriate resources regarding mental health services for South Asians
- Promotes awareness and services related to LGBTQI health issues

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[19] http://www.sakhi.org/immigration-and-civic-integration/

[20] http://saalt.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Health-Care.pdf

MODEL POLICIES

The Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2018[21] (HEAA)
Sponsored by Congressional Tri-Caucus

HEAA is a comprehensive legislation to holistically eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities and addresses health inequalities, their intersections with immigration status, age, disability, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, language, and socioeconomic status, along with obstacles associated with historical and contemporary injustices.

- Ensures patient access to high quality care by enhancing language access services and culturally competent care
- Aims to create a pipeline and training opportunities for health care workers that will allow them to more effectively serve communities of color
- Removes harmful barriers to health insurance coverage and maximizing positive impact of federal health care investments in communities of color
- Incorporates strategies to combat diseases and condition that have a disparate impact on racial and ethnic minorities and to properly address mental and behavioral health issues affecting communities of color

NCSO LED POLICY

MannMukti, a member of the NCSO, encourages healthy, open dialogue of mental health issues in an effort to remove stigma, improve awareness, and promote self-care in South Asian communities. MannMukti has created several campaigns to raise awareness and normalize conversations about mental health:

- Stories of Stigma: South Asian Mental Health[22]: The MannMukti podcast series is aimed to connect community members with mental health professional as well as those with lived experience of mental illness. Each episode features a different guest who speaks about South Asian mental health and the stigma that often follows.
- Humans of MannMukti - A passion project encouraging others to #SpeakUp about mental health and highlighting those who wish to share their stories with the world. The series features personal anecdotes from members of the South Asian community who have struggled with mental health - and the stigma that comes along with it.
- April 2018 Sexual Assault Awareness Month - MannMukti published resources and shared stories from survivors.

[21] https://www.apiahf.org/resource/the-health-equity-and-accountability-act-of-2018/
[22] https://www.mannmukti.org/podcasts